

28. [Unchanged] The medium of claim 25, wherein the program comprises:
means for finding and registering the first server and each server on the server list;
means for connecting and authenticating with the first server and each server on
the server list;
means for storing information regarding each conference learned of by the client;
means for storing information regarding each user learned of by the client;
means for encrypting and authenticating the means for storing information
regarding each conference learned of by the client and means for storing information
regarding each user learned of by the client; and,
means for parsing conference information received each server on the server list.

REMARKS

Applicant has carefully reviewed and considered the Office Action mailed on
November 21, 2000, and the references cited therewith.

No claims are amended. As a result, claims 1-28 are now pending in this
application.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-3, 7, 10, 15, 17, 20-22 and 25-27 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a)
as being unpatentable over Lapoutre et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,136,708) in view of
Ishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,602). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention as claimed involves multiple servers and a client involved
in one or more conferences. Keeping track of the conferences so that users can find a
conference is very difficult since the information is dynamic, and past solutions do not
scale well to higher numbers of servers and conferences. Lapoutre et al. is not analogous
art, as it relates to a distributed processing environment, and the division of tasks between
multiple workstations. The presently claimed invention does not allocate tasks, but tracks
conferences. There is no concept of conference tracking in Lapoutre et al., nor is there
any way that a task can be equated to a conference, as conferences are not assigned, but
happen based on client activity as described in the application.

A prima facie case of obviousness has not been established. **"In order for the
Examiner to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three base criteria must be**

met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure."

M.P.E.P. § 2142

Language in Lapourtre et al. cited in the office action, Col. 5, line 23- Col. 6, line 67 and Col. 10, lines 52-62 relates to finding "out the services offered on the other stations and the loading of the other stations. In addition, a coordinator communicates with processes in its own station to tell them to which station to send their requests for service." Col. 5, lines 29-33. No teaching of a client querying a server as claimed in claim 1, "to learn of the at least one conference maintained by each server" is found in Lapourtre et al. Lapourtre et al. clearly queries to determine if services (what a station can do, not what it is currently doing) are offered, not to learn about a conference being maintained as claimed. Claim 1 further has a first type of server "to maintain at least one conference" and a second type of server "to store a server list". These elements are also not found in Lapourtre et al., and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Lapourtre et al. teaches away from the currently claimed invention at Col. 9, lines 59-63: "The coordinator responds by writing the reporting server in its local 'service' list and broadcasts the updated list to the other coordinators. As a result, every coordinator updates its system 'service' list correspondingly." Thus, there is no need to query a separate server to obtain a list of servers, then query the servers themselves.

The cited language in Lapourtre et al. refers to tracking the services available, not to a conference being maintained as claimed, further illustrating that it is not analogous, and therefore cannot be used to render the present invention obvious. The currently claimed invention avoids this broadcast and maintenance of lists by simply keeping a server list at the server of the second type, and then having clients query that server to find a server maintaining a conference, and then query that server to learn of a

conference. It provides an architecture that is much more scalable and handles dynamic information, without the overhead of continually broadcasting updated service lists.

The Office Action states that "Lapourtre does not disclose computer conferencing and the type of the system and a user list." Applicants agree. The Office Action further states: "Ishikawa discloses two types of clients and servers engaging in a conference with a user list indicating whether a user has a current connection in a client server environment for the purpose of using a better connection method...", and then indicates that the conferencing of clients could be incorporated into the system of Lapourtre et al. in order to facilitate conferencing. This assertion is respectfully traversed. Ishikawa describes connections, not conferences. Further, it was shown above that Lapourtre et al. lacks several elements, not just conferencing. Thus, the combination would not provide all of the missing elements. Further, the combination is improper as Lapourtre et al. is not analogous, and teaches away from the present invention. There is no reason or suggestion to combine the references nor is there a reasonable expectation of success given the teaching away of Lapourtre et al.

Claim 10 also has elements not shown or suggested by the references alone or combined. Among the differences, neither reference shows querying "by a second client of a server of a second type" to find a first type of server, and then querying that first type of server to "learn of a conference published by a first client to the server of the first type." Either of these elements is sufficient to overcome an obviousness rejection.

Claim 20 recites querying "a first server to obtain a server list and to query each server on the server list to learn of at least one conference maintained by each server on the server list." Again, neither element of this two step query is shown or suggested by the references, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 25 is similar to claim 20, and neither element of the two step query is shown or suggested.

Claims 4-6, 8, 9, 11-14, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,602). It is believed that the rejection was meant to be made on the combination of Ishikawa and Lapourtre et al., and the following discussion will proceed on such belief. As each of these claims

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depend upon an independent claim which is now believed allowable in view of the same art, these claims are also believed in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney (612-373-6972) to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on this 21st day of February, 2001.

Candis B. Buending

Name

Signature

